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13 November 03

Dear Josh,

I am approaching your name in my writing on contributions to medical science by scholars after age 65. Could you give me the principal titles of your writing and research labors after 1990, please, as well as your recent personal writings on behalf of sound social policies, please.

My colleagues think I am nuts, but I think it is high time someone stepped up to the plate to prevent the haemolysis that goes on, by compulsory retirements in too many universities today. Sounds as if my 90 years are showing but my Irish ancestors were not easily put down.

I have been having a ball with some in my projected "Old Endeavour" because some of those in my early book, "Young Endeavour" are recurring in "Old Endeavour" e.g. my guide and friend Sir Charles Sherrington. He was still writing (poetry) at age 95.

His predecessor in physiology at Liverpool was Dr. Richard Caton who first recorded the brain waves in 1870. After that wonderful contribution he became Lord Mayor of Liverpool and an active student of Greek archaeology and the Hippocratic practice of medicine -- in other words factually based, not garbage. Hippocrates warned against employing slaves who had seizures while observing flashes from rotating wheels for instance.

People forget that John Collins Warren was 68 years old when he agreed to try out ether as an anesthetic at the request of a medical student at Mass. Gen. Hosp.

So you will be in good company in "Old Endeavour". I'm just finishing my account of Dr. Alphonse Laveran, who died at work in his laboratory. I think I shall use Sir William Osler's comments: "It would be hard to name any single event of the 19th century of greater practical importance than the discovery of Laveran." Osler grew up with one of the early microscopists in Toronto.

I hope you are well. At 90 I cannot complain. I have had too much sun on my head and face, living in Mexico, Australia and the Mediterranean*.

J. Murray Luck is at the typist's now.

Warmest regards and good health,

BILL